

14 Vital Skills for Supervisors

Evaluating Performance



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Evaluating Performance

Give employees ongoing feedback on their performance so that they always know what they're doing right—and what they need to improve.

Benefits of Frequent Feedback

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- Effective supervisors shower employees with frequent feedback
- They praise superior work and provide constructive suggestions on how employees can elevate mediocre or substandard work into something truly excellent 



Evaluating Performance

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- Workers should never wonder if their performance meets or exceeds your expectations—or your organization's needs
- Remove the mystery 🔊
- Don't withhold and save feedback for an annual performance appraisal
- Many companies set specific policies and procedures



Guidelines to Performance Evaluation

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- Cite specifics
- Give feedback that's based on well-defined actions or behavior that you observe
 - Eliminates ambiguity and helps establish a clear reference point for improving performance
 - Prevents workers from becoming defensive
 - Here's an Example....




Avoid the “but”

- To give critical feedback, frame it constructively
- Begin with a sincere, positive observation
- Don't follow it with a “but”
 - Employees will disregard your opening compliment as soon as they sense you're about to shift into criticism mode



Set a Timetable for Implementation

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- Set a time frame for the changes needed
- Ideally, you want people to act on what you say within hours or days of your comments 
- Example:
 - Set a goal of having the employee take certain actions over the next week
 - Set a date within a week to meet and evaluate the employee's progress



Monitor your Effectiveness

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- Test whether you are giving employees sufficient feedback
- Approach them regularly
- Ask, “Do I give you enough feedback on your performance?”
- Explain that you want to communicate both positive and negative aspects of performance so that everyone’s aware of how they’re doing



Handling Annual Appraisals

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- Treat annual appraisals as opportunities to step back and assess performance issues that you've already covered throughout the year 📢
- A formal review will then not overwhelm the employees
- Adopt a “no surprises” goal so that your employees don't feel blindsided



Negative Input

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- Tie negative input to suggestions, not threats
- List the benefits the employee could gain by adopting a more team-oriented attitude 📢
- Then involve the employee in creating an action plan for improvement



Confront Problems Head-on

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- Don't gloss over an employee's failings by resorting to "fair," "neutral" or "competent" ratings
- You will lack proper documentation if you subsequently decide to terminate them
- You will also prevent giving your employee a chance to fix the problem



Preparing for Performance Reviews

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- Scan the employee's job description and the results of the last evaluation
- Remind yourself of goals, objectives and related commitments 🔊
- Understand the history of performance evaluation and have a clear sense of what you want to achieve for the future



Warning

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- Don't just document performance problems
- It's important to track what the employee does right as well
- Maintain complete records on every worker in which you cite instances of both praiseworthy behavior and substandard behavior



- Use the “disc” formula (describe impact, specify consequence) to organize your feedback
 - Start with a one- or two-sentence description of the action or behavior you want to address and its impact
 - Then specify your desired outcome and the good and bad consequences



It's True

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- No one likes to receive “average” ratings in a performance review, so use a scale that avoids “average” and “below average”
- Better examples include poor-marginal-competent-above average-outstanding, or a numerical system such as one-to-five

